

To learn more about PEP and HIV and AIDS, call
the New York State HIV/AIDS Information Line:

1-800-541-AIDS (English)

1-800-233-SIDA (Spanish)

PEP IS ONLY FOR EMERGENCIES
Protect Yourself from HIV All the Time by
Using Condoms and by Not Sharing Needles

Rape and Sexual Assault Survivors:

Go to a hospital emergency room or health care setting right away so that you can get all of the care you need. Women can also get emergency birth control to prevent pregnancy. Medicaid and Medicare pay for PEP for rape and sexual assault survivors. The Crime Victims Board may also pay for PEP, call 1-800-247-8035. TTY: 1-888-289-9747, M-F 9AM-5PM.

If you have been raped or sexually assaulted, call:
1-800-522-5006. TTY: 1-800-655-1789.

What can I do if I have just been exposed to HIV?

***There may be treatment you
can take to lower the chances
you will have HIV.***

Don't Wait! Act Now!

Read on to find out how...

I think I've been exposed to HIV. Can I still prevent HIV infection?

There may be times when you have a high-risk exposure to HIV (this means the chances of passing HIV are great) and you cannot or did not protect yourself. For example:

- The condom slipped or broke during use.
- Your partner has HIV and you usually use condoms, but didn't the last time you had sex.
- Rape or a sexual assault.
- You shared a needle to shoot drugs with someone and you are not sure if he or she has HIV.
- You know that the person with whom you shared needles or had unprotected sex has HIV.

In these cases, if you seek medical care right away, you may be able to take medicines that may help you from getting infected with HIV. This is called **PEP**, or **Post-Exposure Prophylaxis** (prophylaxis is a drug that prevents sickness).

PEP has been used for people who come in contact with HIV by accident — like a nurse getting stuck by a used needle. Now, PEP can be used for more than just on-the-job accidents. Sometimes this is called nPEP. The “n” in nPEP stands for “non-occupational” which means that you did not get exposed to HIV at work. PEP (or nPEP) is only for people who were *just* exposed to HIV and do not already have it.

DON'T WAIT! ACT NOW!

When do I start PEP?

If you have been exposed to HIV, go to a hospital or clinic *right away*.

You should start PEP within 2 hours of your exposure and generally no later than 36 hours after your exposure.

What should I know before I start PEP?

When you go to the hospital or clinic, you will be asked to have an HIV test. Taking an HIV test at this time will let you know if you already have HIV or not. It is your choice whether or not to take the HIV test.

There may be a cost for PEP and it may be covered by your health insurance. Ask your provider about costs for PEP before starting it.

PEP combines three HIV drugs (pills) that you take for four weeks. **Some HIV drugs may not be safe for pregnant women.** Be sure to let the doctor or health care worker know if you may be pregnant so that they know which drugs to give you.

Does PEP work?

While PEP has not been proven to work for all high-risk exposures to HIV, scientists showed that for on-the-job accidents — like when a nurse is stuck by a needle that was infected with HIV — it stops HIV infection about 80% of the time (or, 8 out of every 10 times it is used). So PEP may also be helpful for other types of exposure.

What should I do after I start PEP?

You need to see a doctor during the four weeks you are on PEP and again at the end of the four weeks when you are done with the PEP medicines. You will be tested for HIV again after the four weeks. Ask your health care provider for a number to call with questions about your PEP treatment.

While you are on PEP, and after you are done, be sure to protect yourself and others from HIV infection.

1. Avoid sex or use condoms each time you have sex.
2. Do not shoot drugs. If you do, do not share needles or syringes. You can get new, clean needles or syringes at some drug stores or through a syringe exchange program. Call the phone numbers below to learn where you can get new, clean needles and syringes.
3. Do not breastfeed.